

Julie Spicer

From: David Bay <davidbay72@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 07, 2019 10:32 AM
To: Julie Spicer
Cc: Daniel Powers
Subject: Lwrl field rename for Mathew powers
Attachments: mp3fieldrequests.docx; robjessup.pdf; ronlambert.pdf; willmconnell.pdf; kathleenjongsma.pdf; kevinkobetisch.pdf; sejaldesai.pdf; terrycourter.pdf

Good Morning Mrs. Spicer,

My name is David Bay and I am the current President of Lakewood Ranch Little league. I am emailing you in reponse to in having one of our little league fields renamed after one of our players Mathew Powers(MP3). Please find attached the letter of approval from our Board of Directors with an approval for funding as well. I have also attached several letters of recommendation that have been sent to us about Mathew. The Powers family has been and still is heavily involved in our league and always willing to lend a hand no matter the situation. We would be more than welcome to offer any information and or assistance at any time in order to make this request happen. Please feel free to reach out to me at any time. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

David Bay
LWRL President
C-813-810-2627
Email: davidbay72@gmail.com

BCC - Aug 20th



LAKEWOOD RANCH LITTLE LEAGUE

Florida Section IV, District 26

5350 Lakewood Ranch Blvd
Bradenton, Florida 34211
playball@lwrlittleleague.com

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Lakewood Ranch Little League Board requests that Manatee County name Little League Field #1 of Lakewood Ranch Park in honor of former player Matthew Ryan Powers. The League Board voted in favor of this honor on May 8th, 2019 and has further decided to fund \$5000.00 for the cost of signage associated with this honor.

Matthew Powers was killed alongside his friend, Chase Coyner, on September 15th, 2018, on their way to the Lakewood Ranch High School Homecoming Dance. Matthew fell in love with baseball, when he started playing in 2006, at 3 years old, while stationed in Hohenfels, Germany. He played at every duty station after that. Matthew was active in the Lakewood Ranch Little League program for seven seasons between 2014 and 2017 and regularly volunteering to work in the league snack bar from 2016 to 2018. Matthew, his younger brother, sister, and parents spent, and continue to spend, countless hours at Lakewood Ranch Park with the Little League program. Matthew loved playing baseball and, in his time playing baseball with us, he developed considerably, not only in his skills as a baseball player, but in his sportsmanship, personality, confidence, and of course in himself.

Matthew left a mark on almost everyone he met, as is evidenced by the impact of his loss in the community and can be seen in the statements of character that have been submitted on his behalf. He was a fun loving, funny, hardworking, thoughtful, respectful, and caring young man who would go out of his way to help others. He was born into and raised in a dual-military family, traveling the world and eventually settling in Manatee County, where his father was medically retired from the military after 25 years of service, due to an injury incurred during deployment to Afghanistan. He learned what it meant to be an American citizen and witnessed the cost of defending our freedoms, as school and neighborhood friends lost their mothers or fathers in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He stepped up repeatedly to help his mother and siblings, as his father repeatedly deployed to combat zones for extended periods of time and assisted his father following his disabling injury. He joined the JROTC program at Lakewood Ranch High School in 2017 because he wanted to give something back to the nation and wanted to participate in some of the types of training activities his parents would tell stories about.

During his freshman year at Lakewood Ranch High School, Matthew joined the Mustang Marching Band, reluctantly having to give up playing organized baseball. He focused his love of baseball on helping his younger brother improve, volunteering in the league snack bar after marching band practice, and sometimes helping assist at his brother's practices. Playing the clarinet and eventually the tenor saxophone, he got hooked on the 'band life' and decided he wanted to become a High School Music Director, attending several Summer Music Camps at Florida State University, and working towards attending FSU in 2021.

In his short life, Matthew Powers left an indelible mark on this community, Lakewood Ranch High School, and our league – bestowing the honor of naming a field, that he spent so many hours of his youth playing baseball and growing up on, is a fitting honor.

Thank you for your consideration and time in this matter,

Sincerely,

David Bay

LWRL President

4/8/2019

Ref: Matthew Powers

Dear County Commissioners,

My name is Rob Jessup and I was a volunteer coach at the Lakewood Ranch Little League for 10 years spanning 20 seasons (Fall/Spring) 2007 - 2017. In addition to coaching many levels for the league, I have coached a few All-Star teams and have served on the board for a couple of years and volunteered countless hours in many capacities.

I'm writing to you today to offer an insight into the character, personality and impact that Matthew Powers had on me, his teammates and the league back in 2014, when I coached Matt.

It was the start of the 2014 Fall Baseball season at Lakewood Ranch Little League. I was in my 6th year of coaching my Son, Jason and many other outstanding Lakewood Ranch kids. 2014 was a big year for Jason and many other 10-12-year old boys that would be making the "leap" from the Minor league level to the Major leagues. In the Little League world, this is a huge adjustment. Not just physically but mentally as well. Many of the returning Major players are bigger, faster, stronger, throw harder, hit harder and have experience. Many of the returning players in 2014 came from an All-Star team that finished as one of the top 8 teams in the entire state of Florida that previous Spring. The point I'm making here is that the Major Division at the Lakewood Ranch Little League was stacked with excellent players. Many of these boys are now on the local high school teams.

The 2014 Fall Season started with a tryout in which the coaches put the boys through a few baseball drills, so they can scout their skill level and prepare player rankings for draft night. As I mentioned earlier, many of the younger boys moving up were smaller, slower and maybe a bit awkward compared to the returning players. The difference is evident and doesn't go unnoticed by all involved with the tryout. For those that are young, new or not as skilled, the tryouts can be a nerve-racking experience. This is when I first noticed Matthew Powers or as he would be known "MP3".

Matthew was a new player to the league, who I believe moved in from out of state around that time. I hadn't recognized him in my previous years of coaching, so I was eager to scout him and see how he would stack up amongst Lakewood Ranch's best. Matthew was left handed and being left handed myself, my attention gravitated towards Matthew when it was his turn to tryout.

Now, as I mentioned earlier, you have some kids that are big, strong and have been training for years to play baseball. So, when you mix players that train for years amongst players that play for fun and recreation, as Matthew did, it's easy for the "rec kid" to give up, be intimidated or worse yet, quit while trying out because of the intimidation factor or belief that one can't compete so why bother?

The first skill set that caught my attention was Matthew's effort. There was no quit in Matthew Powers. Matthew was a smaller, skinny kid with glasses who resembled a young, toned-down "Wild-Thing" if you've ever watched the movie "Major League" with Charlie Sheen. At least, that's what I thought at the time. Matthew wasn't as skilled as the All-Stars but not many boys that day were. Matt was good enough but mostly what was impressive was how Matt competed against these players. He showed no intimidation. If he was scared or intimidated, I did not notice it. I can relate to what Matt must have

been feeling though, as my Son was nervous and anxious beyond belief that day. He told me so and talked to me about quitting.

Matthew hustled and stayed focused during the tryout while many other kids, for whom were nervous, clowned around and didn't pay attention to the drills or instruction. That's where Matt stood out initially. As I look back on my player ranking sheet from that tryout, the highest score I gave Matthew was his hustle and effort, above anything else; although, did have a good, lefty arm too.

Now, the memories that remain for me of Matthew is not based on what I wrote regarding his tryout. That was to just let you know that in a time filled with pressure and anxiety, Matthew stepped up to the plate, had fun and did his best when others could not find the courage to do so. That was impressive but what I'm about to write is what I'll always hold dear to my heart. And out of approximately 200 kids I've coached over the years, here's why I'll always remember Matthew.

As the season started, Jason was still anxious about it and wasn't having any fun. He had never witnessed baseball players this good previously. He constantly worried about getting hurt and honestly, anything else that might go wrong during a game. As his coach and his Dad, I tried my best to encourage him and build his confidence, but I couldn't get through to him. I was always worried that he might quit or not even try. I wanted him to learn the "life-lesson" of never quitting when you commit to something and to always try your best. Then one day, he came home from school and he told me about the "Matthew kid that I drafted". He told me "Dad, he's in my class and he's really funny". I'm thinking to myself how focused and coachable Matt is during practice. He just does what he's asked, but here is my Son, telling me, with a huge smile on his face, how Matt is cracking jokes, making witty comments in school and I'm wondering if Matt would be in detention instead of at our games? 😊

With that a bond was formed, which helped my Son look forward to going to play baseball, with his new friend, together, against these big, strong, intimidating athletes. Jay knew he had Matt to face the challenge with. And that helped him move toward the challenge rather than away from it.

As a Father, I couldn't thank Matthew enough for the encouragement and confidence he unknowingly provided my Son during this time. Jason even picked uniform #4 because Matthew was #3.

As the season went along, our team struggled to win. Many of our players were young, but they always showed fight. They even beat the best team a couple of times. What I remembered about Matt during the season was how he never gave up and always hustled. Here is a "rec-ball" kid going up against kids that not only play baseball almost every day, but they train to play baseball, almost every day. He wasn't scared. He always tried his best. He always had a positive attitude. He was coachable and polite, but he had this "hustle-motor" all of the time which prompted me to nickname him "MP-3" (Matt Powers #3). Matt was intense when he was on the field and his focus spilled over into the team's personality.

Matt showed leadership, mostly by example but there were times, I could see him giving Jason and other players words of encouragement...or cracking a joke 😊. He was the leader for the boys on the team, like my Jason, who were overwhelmed at times. They all could see that Matt never gave up and always was going to give his all. "If Matt could do it, so could they". That is a leader. Matt is the friend that showed it could be done when many were afraid to try. He built confidence in those around him even as he worked on his own. He made his teammates better.

I thank you for taking the time to read this. In my experience as a coach and a leader in business, I understand the values and characteristics of successful leaders and most of all, good people. I understand what it takes to be a leader. Matthew Powers had that. In his short time here, he exemplified the qualities of what Lakewood Ranch and the Lakewood Ranch Little League community represent. Tough, no-quit in them, respectful, hard-working people who look out for and take care of others.

I encourage you to name a field at the league in honor of Matthew and for not only in name but for the qualities and characteristics he represented. For those that didn't think they could that did. For those that may not have been the All-Star in skill but showed effort and leadership like one. For those that don't quit when times were tough. That is Matthew Powers.

Now I only had Matt for one season but hopefully you could tell it was a memorable one. I even drafted his brother Robert, (RP-10) a few years later, because I had coached Matt. (Cut from the same cloth, those two).

I appreciate the opportunity to write this on behalf of Matthew. He is one of my former players that I will never forget but it's even more personal for me because of what he did for my Son and the memories I have together with him, because my Son never quit...thanks to Matthew Powers (MP#3)

Thank you,

Robert A. Jessup

Robert A. Jessup

rjessup@dsservices.com

c: 941-448-9414



The Bands of LAKEWOOD RANCH HIGH SCHOOL

May 1, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

Hello and thanks for your time. I am writing to you today to give my personal endorsement of Mr. Matthew Powers. He is a young man that led a life worthy of dedication. While his death was a tragedy for all of us that knew and loved him, his remembrance is motivation for countless kids to do better, to be better. I am aware that there is a proposal to have a Lakewood Ranch baseball field named after him and I wholeheartedly support the initiative. Generations of little league boys and girls should know what it means to "be like Matt".

I knew Matthew for a year and a half. I met him as an 8th grader as he auditioned for and earned a spot in the Lakewood Ranch marching band during the spring of 2017. He established his place quickly amongst the students as a young man that could take care of business by having his responsibilities covered while being the type of kid that elevates the morale of those around him with quick wit and great comedic timing. We call that "flipping the switch" around here and it is tough to do. The members of the LRHS band program are expected to perform at the very highest level, exhibit discipline and have FUN! Matt handled it all with aplomb.

Matt was a natural leader and musician whose trajectory in the LRHS band program was limitless. He was certainly on track to be a section leader, band officer and who knows, perhaps drum major of this fine program. The kids respected him, I respected him, he was a great young man.

I observed Matt's desire to achieve lofty goals and I am aware that he contributed to his community by volunteering his time and talents in church, with his baseball team and as a son and sibling at home. His parents continue to contribute greatly to our success as active Boosters. Their tireless advocacy is paving the way for positive changes that will prevent subsequent automobile accidents on State Road 64 like the one that took Mathew's life. They are shaping a better future for all of us. The Lakewood Ranch baseball field dedication would be an important part of furthering that legacy.

In closing, please consider dedicating a Lakewood Ranch baseball field after young Matthew Powers. If you have any further questions or desire any documentation, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ron Lambert

Director of Bands, LRHS

5802 Garden Lakes Fern
Bradenton, FL 34203
April 5, 2019

To: Manatee County Commissioners
Subject: Memorial for Matthew Ryan Powers

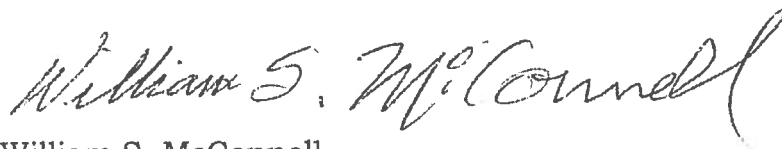
Matthew Ryan Powers, age 15, was tragically killed as a passenger in a traffic accident last September 15, 2018 on Route 64 through no fault of his own while on his way to his first high school homecoming dance. Manatee County lost a promising musician and future leader.

I first met Matthew five years ago when his family had just transitioned from many worldwide duty stations during their Army careers to civilian life in Lakewood Ranch. He was in my Sunday school class at Living Lord Lutheran Church. Matt cheerfully supported younger classmates in reading during our classes. He reliably volunteered for many tasks around church and helped with the church picnic. He demonstrated respect, compassion, and helpfulness especially for elders. He was clearly a trustworthy oldest brother who helped his parents with child care.

Matt was very active in many activities at Lakewood Ranch High School. He was a mainstay on the Little League baseball team and played clarinet in the Marching Band. At his memorial service, many of his classmates and faculty shared heart-felt memories and recalled Matt's unique sense of humor. After the service, the entire Marching Band, wearing his trademark Hawaiian shirts, serenaded the attendees in his honor. In his short life, Matt had made many friends and found a hometown.

A fitting reminder of Matt's enthusiasm for life would be to name a baseball field at Lakewood Ranch Park after him. Honoring Matt will also be a tribute to all the youth who contribute so much to community life. Please consider doing this.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William S. McConnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

William S. McConnell,
Captain, USNR (ret.)

May 7, 2019

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you on behalf of Matthew Powers and his family and to encourage you to name a baseball field at Lakewood Ranch Park in his honor.

I am the pastor at Living Lord Lutheran Church where Matthew Powers was and his family are active members of the congregation. I am new to this church having started my ministry here on April 1, 2018. I only knew Matthew for a very short time due to his death in the automobile accident on September 15, 2018. What I do know about Matthew is that as a young man in high school, he was active in the life of the church and active in many extracurricular activities like marching band and baseball.

Matthew regularly attended worship with his family and was involved in the youth group. My impression of Matthew was that his faith was very important to him. Many members of the church have shared stories with me of Matthew's leadership abilities demonstrated in his participation in worship service and youth programs. His confirmation verse was Philippians 4:13 – "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (NKJV) This verse is stenciled on a wall in his bedroom. This verse served as a reminder of the importance of faith and how Jesus was with him as he started each and every day.

As his pastor, I presided at his funeral and I heard story after story that spoke to his integrity, his leadership qualities, and how he had built solid relationships with his peers. Many of his peers spoke about his ability to make them laugh in any situation. He obviously had an impact on the lives of many people. The naming of a baseball field for him is one way that his short life will continue to have an impact on the lives of young people who play this sport as well as their families.

I would ask that you prayerfully consider this action.

Rev. Terry M. Courter

Pastor, Living Lord Lutheran Church

April 6, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter to advocate for naming a baseball field at Lakewood Ranch Park to honor Lakewood Ranch High School Student Matthew Powers. I believe naming this park for Matthew (Matt) will be a fitting testimony to this wonderful young man who died so needlessly and so prematurely. Matt was a terrific role model for his peers, and naming a park after him may help those who play there to strive to be the best they can be, just as Matt did in his daily living.


I have known Matt since January of 2014, when he and his wonderful family began attending Living Lord Lutheran Church. At Living Lord, I was the Sunday School Coordinator so I quickly involved the three Powers children in all Sunday School activities and I even recruited Matt's parents, Rebecca and Dan Powers, to teach Sunday School. As a former university professor and teacher for most of my adult life, I quickly realized that we at LLC were blessed to have the Powers family among us, and that I was particularly blessed to have Matt, Robert, and Katie in my life, as I would be able to interact with them on Sundays and at many other opportunities.

Matt was a joy to know! He was such a helper to me and to so many people at Living Lord. Everyone knew the family and everyone knew Matt, in spite of the fact that we have three worship services and often don't know those who attend services other than those we individually attend. Matt was an acolyte, and he took this role seriously. He ushered for different services. He ran the computer that displayed the order of worship, the hymns, and the church's announcements. He helped with the Sunday morning coffee service and the Bread Ministry. He regularly helped our older congregants to their seats in the sanctuary and walked them to their cars, holding the umbrella if it was raining.

I particularly remember him helping me, as Sunday School Coordinator, with the church picnic and with the Sunday School project of selling t-shirts to raise funds for children's programming at the church. He was also good at flipping flapjacks and serving sausages and eggs at the Youth Pancake breakfasts that we do once or twice a year. Happy memories for me, as the person in charge of the church's Children's Christmas Program were memories of Matt helping the youngest children with their parts and their uses of the microphone, with his reading from the Christmas scriptures, with his singing familiar carols, and with his playing musical instruments, including the saxophone, the clarinet, and the keyboard.

It has been my pleasure to have watched Matt grow physically, and boy did he grow over these five years, emotionally, and spiritually. I was blessed to know him. I would love to see a field named after Matt and feel it would be a beautiful tribute to this fine young man. I'm sorry that we won't see him grow into that high school band director he really wanted to be. Our loss. I'm sure he would have been a terrific motivator for his band students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Stumpf Jongsma". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kathleen Stumpf Jongsma

Dear Members,

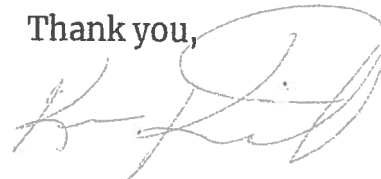
My name is Kevin Kobetitsch. I am a retired New York City Police Officer and currently a deputy with the Manatee County Sheriff's Office. I am writing to you on behalf of the family of Matthew Powers.

I understand that the Lakewood Ranch Little League is trying to have one of its fields named after Matthew Powers. I think this would be wonderful to do and a great way to honor Matthew's memory.

I was fortunate enough to be Matthew's coach during the fall season of 2016 and again in the spring of 2017. Matthew was one of the most liked players on my team and during his time with us on the playing field made many friends. My son, Ryan, and Matthew really connected and stayed friends even after baseball was over as they both entered high school. That's the great thing about baseball, through the ups and downs of the sport, young kids can connect as they mature and carry that over into other aspects of their lives.

I hope that you will consider letting the league name a field in his honor. My family and I miss Matthew every day as I'm sure many others do. Nothing can ever replace Matthew being here with us, but hopefully with your help this field in his honor will be a special place to remember all the good will Matthew shared with his teammates and friends.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kobetitsch', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Kobetitsch

April 9, 2019

To whom it may concern,

It is an honor to write this statement on behalf of Matthew Powers and his family. Matthew was a prior student of mine at Lakewood Ranch High School who was taken from us too soon. I had the privilege to have Matthew in my class for his 2017-2018 freshman English course. During my time with Matthew I was able to see him grow from a quiet, shy boy to a happy go-lucky, confident, young man.

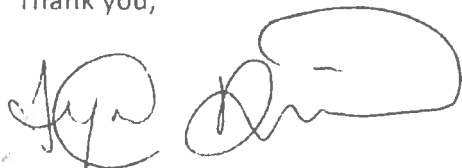
Teaching a freshman course, you are faced with classes filled with quiet, intimidated students who are now considered the "under dogs" on campus, Matthew was no exception. He always came to class on time, was prepared and I rarely needed to speak to him, as he didn't say much. He was a bright student, who should have been in my honors course, as the regular course was not enough of a challenge for him, which, I tried to remind him of this daily.

As the year progressed, I started to see a different side of Matthew. A more outgoing, social, leader if you will. We began talking from time to time and I was able to learn about his likes, dislikes and passions. He had a passion to laugh, to live, to truly enjoy each passing moment. One of the many things Matthew loved talking about was his love for music, as he was part of the marching/band family here at Lakewood Ranch High School. Matthew was an active member where he played the clarinet. His dedication to not only his fellow bandmates, but to his instrument was like no other. He was a leader to some, a brother to many, but most importantly, a friend to all.

Not only was he an excellent and hard-working student, but he also dedicated himself to enriching the lives of students and faculty around him. Matthew was truly special for his compassion and commitment to helping others.

Matthew will forever live in our hearts and minds, and here is to hoping we will see his name across the field as a simple reminder of always enjoying life to fullest as he once did.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sejal Desai', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Sejal Desai
Lakewood Ranch High School
desais@manateeschools.net
(941) 727 – 6100 (ext. 2141)

May 7, 2019

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you on behalf of Matthew Powers and his family and to encourage you to name a baseball field at Lakewood Ranch Park in his honor.

I am the pastor at Living Lord Lutheran Church where Matthew Powers was and his family are active members of the congregation. I am new to this church having started my ministry here on April 1, 2018. I only knew Matthew for a very short time due to his death in the automobile accident on September 15, 2018. What I do know about Matthew is that as a young man in high school, he was active in the life of the church and active in many extracurricular activities like marching band and baseball.

Matthew regularly attended worship with his family and was involved in the youth group. My impression of Matthew was that his faith was very important to him. Many members of the church have shared stories with me of Matthew's leadership abilities demonstrated in his participation in worship service and youth programs. His confirmation verse was Philippians 4:13 – "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (NKJV) This verse is stenciled on a wall in his bedroom. This verse served as a reminder of the importance of faith and how Jesus was with him as he started each and every day.

As his pastor, I presided at his funeral and I heard story after story that spoke to his integrity, his leadership qualities, and how he had built solid relationships with his peers. Many of his peers spoke about his ability to make them laugh in any situation. He obviously had an impact on the lives of many people. The naming of a baseball field for him is one way that his short life will continue to have an impact on the lives of young people who play this sport as well as their families.

I would ask that you prayerfully consider this action.

Rev. Terry M. Courter

Pastor, Living Lord Lutheran Church

From: Kristine Scott <kristinescott3@yahoo.com>

Date: August 30, 2019 at 5:51:39 PM EDT

To: priscilla.trace@mymanatee.org, reggie.bellamy@mymanatee.org, steve.jonsson@mymanatee.org, misty.servia@mymanatee.org, vanessa.baugh@mymanatee.org, carol.whitmore@mymanatee.org, betsy.benac@mymanatee.org

Subject: Matthew Powers

Matthew was a dear friend to my daughter at LRHS. His passing was such a tremendous loss to her and all the band members. I understand there is a vote to name a field at the park after him. I would like to express how much this would Mean to all The kids that miss him terribly.

Thoughtfully

Sent from my iPhone Kristine Scott

Almost a year On Aug 30, 2019, at 6:21 PM, Kim Cartano <kcartano@earthlink.net> wrote:

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

Almost a year ago, we lost a very special 15 year old boy in a horrific car accident on SR64. As I am writing this I am holding back tears and my lip is quivering.

My dear friend, Rebecca, Matthew's mom, called me that night when his Life360 app stopped moving. When she couldn't reach him. She called me to go to her house and look after her two younger children. My husband and I sat with them, kept happy faces for them as we waited.... we waited to see if Matthew was OK.

I remember hours later what it looked like when Rebecca and Dan walked in the door. I remember the screams and cries of Matthew's brother and sister as they shared the news that Matthew would not be coming home again. I hear this in my mind often and my heart breaks a little more each time.

Such an unthinkable loss. The loss of a child. Two beautiful souls left this world and their loving families and friends the evening of September 15, 2018.

The Powers Family is so strong. They are so very grateful to this community for the outpouring of love and support. I am so proud of this community and I am very grateful to be a part of it.

So I humbly ask that on September 10, 2019 you approve the the resolution to name Field 1 of Lakewood Ranch Park the "Matthew Ryan Powers Memorial Field". This would mean the world to his family and friends and give us all a place where his beautiful memory can live on. Where the joy of the game of baseball and of this community can become a part of future generations.

My thanks to each and every one of you for your consideration.

Kindest regards,
Kim Cartano
Cell: 941-224-8633